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**AFGHANISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Afghan Entrepreneurs “Dream and Achieve”

**A popular reality TV show promotes entrepreneurship and economic growth**



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*During the filming of Dream and Achieve, contestants present their business plans to a panel of judges.*

*The USAID-supported Tolo TV show Dream and Achieve demonstrates that entrepreneurship can play a vital role in the economic development of Afghanistan.*

Tolo TV's *Dream and Achieve* (*Fikr wa Talash*) has awakened Afghanistan's entrepreneurial spirit. In a country where new business development is essential for continued economic growth, this popular television show is helping entrepreneurs improve their businesses while educating viewers about the importance of the private sector.

On the weekly reality show, promising Afghan business leaders compete against one another to win financial support for their enterprises. Contestants from across the country present the merits of their business plans to a panel of expert judges, who must choose one winner from a pool of 300 competitors.

Premiering in June 2008, *Dream and Achieve* quickly capitalized on the popularity of reality TV and enjoys high viewership. By engaging the Afghan public with true stories of up-and-coming businessmen and women, the show encourages the creation and development of small businesses. Viewers learn practical business skills and basic competitive strategy while supporting their favorite entrepreneurs.

Towards the end of the show, USAID links the top contestants to business support organizations so that the contestants can strengthen their business models and their chances to win.

In the first season, the top five contestants included two women, as well as an ex-warlord who had disarmed to start a dairy business. The gender and diverse backgrounds of the winners truly reveal the changing times in Afghanistan. The winner of the grand prize, Faizulhaq Moshkani, is a father of nine who owns a plastic recycling plant in Kandahar. His \$20,000 prize will enable him to expand his business to Kabul, where he plans to build a hydroelectric plant to power a new recycling and plastics factory. The second prize of \$10,000 went to a young mother who owns a jam and sauce company in Herat.

The future is bright for *Dream and Achieve* and its contestants. Corporate sponsorship from companies including Roshan Telecom and Bank-e-Millie is increasing due to the popularity of the show. Tolo TV has begun recruiting contestants for next season and plans to run a follow-up episode about the top contestants to track their business progress.